

General Regulations Fundamental Research Grants

The Foundation against Cancer (FAC) funds Grants for Fundamental Cancer Research in Belgium.

Project selection entails **two phases of selection**:

- A **first phase based** on a **Letter of Intent** submitted to the FAC within the prescribed deadline. **Projects will be preselected** by members of the Scientific Committee for Fundamental Research. Applicants will be notified by mail of the results of this preselection. The preselected candidates will then be invited to submit a Full Application Form to the FAC within a prescribed deadline.
- In a **second phase**, the members of the Scientific Committee and three external international referees appointed by the Committee will analyze the **Full Application Forms**. The final selection will be made by the Scientific Committee for Fundamental Research in a plenary session.

Requisites for participation

All researchers affiliated **to a research facility** subordinate to a university, nonprofit association, public utility foundation or private foundation, are authorized to submit a research proposal insofar as the research will be conducted in **Belgium** without direct commercial purpose.

Applicants who benefit from an ongoing Fundamental Research Grant from the FAC **after December 2024 cannot** submit a new proposal.

Letter of Intent and Full Application Form

A Letter of Intent can be submitted either by a single applicant or by several coapplicants, each of which from a different Belgian university. The funding of a research project carried out jointly by institutions in different regions of Belgium is therefore possible.

The same project cannot be submitted simultaneously for a Fundamental Research Grant and for a Translational & Clinical Research Grant.

An applicant or co-applicant is allowed to submit **only one Fundamental Research project**.

For projects submitted by co-applicants, one lead applicant has to be chosen. He/she will be the main contact person for the FAC.

An applicant or co-applicant is required to hold a permanent postdoctoral position³, i.e. to be a permanent research worker holding a PhD in a research institute or a university, with scientific and financial autonomy.

Each applicant¹ or co-applicant²³ may add in the application the name of one copromotor. A **copromotor** has to work in the same university or institution as the concerned (co)-applicant. He/she may supervise the project but has no financial responsibility in it.

The initial choice by the applicant(s) for either Fundamental **or** Translational & Clinical Research is essential, as the Letter of Intent cannot be transferred from one Scientific Committee to the other.

The Letter of Intent and the Full Application Form should be written in **English** except for a lay summary in French or Dutch (only in the Full Application Form).

Research project

The project should contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms of how cancer progresses to unlock new ways to prevent, detect and treat it. Its scientific value should be of the highest quality, with original objectives and approaches. Projects submitted by single applicants should be a major part of their research work.

Duration of the Grant

Applicants may request funding for a period of two to four years. The Scientific Committee reserves the right to reduce the proposed duration when appropriate.

After acceptance and funding of a project, a duly motivated extension of its duration can be granted for a period not exceeding one year, within the initial budget allocation. An extension for more than one year will have to be approved by the Scientific Committee.

¹ **Lead applicant:** The lead applicant is the person who actively applies for a Grant. He/She is the leader of the project and he/she has the primary responsibility for the intellectual direction of the research. He/She assumes also financial responsibility for the Grant.

² **Co-applicant:** The co-applicant is a researcher participating in a **multicentric grant application** and makes a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research. He/She has also the responsibility for the financial and scientific aspects of the research conducted in his/hers university/research institute but belongs to a different university as the lead applicant.

³ **A permanent postdoctoral position** is occupied by a permanent research worker holding a PhD in a research institute or at university level, with scientific and financial autonomy.

Scientific evaluation of the project

The scientific evaluation of the project falls under the jurisdiction of the members of the FAC's Scientific Committee for Fundamental Research.

The principal criteria for evaluation are:

- the project's scientific pertinence and originality;
- the previous research, track record and publications of the applying team; - the scientific environment of the applying team.

By submitting a research project for this call, applicants authorize the FAC to transfer the application and its attachments to international referees, except for elements that are specifically referred to in the Full Application Form as "excluded" (conflict of interest, confidentiality, ...).

Selection of the projects by the Fundamental Scientific Committee cannot be challenged.

Costs covered by the funding

The funds granted by the FAC must be used to cover the execution costs of the project as detailed in the Full Application Form. This may include remuneration of scientific and technical coworkers as well as working and equipment costs as stated and detailed in the request for funds, linked to the execution of the project (laboratory supplies and products; acquisition, installation and maintenance of scientific and technical devices and instruments, etc.).

No expenses in excess of the total amount will be authorized, but substantiated transfer from one allocation to another can be permitted pending authorization from the FAC.

Overhead

The research organization, whatever its legal status, **is not authorized to withdraw overheads** (indirect costs such as rents for labs or offices, access to scientific journals and databases, general administration costs, ...) from the funds granted by the FAC.

Maximum requested amount

The maximum amount of funding granted per project (unicentric or multicentric) may not exceed € 150 000/year (VAT inclusive).

- € 600 000 (VAT inclusive) for a 4 years project;
- € 450 000 (VAT inclusive) for a 3 years project;
- € 300 000 (VAT inclusive) for a 2 years project;

Beneficiary financial account

Upon submission of the funding request, the applicant must provide an account number of the beneficiary. This account must **imperatively** be allocated to an institution having the status of nonprofit association, public utility foundation or private foundation, with consent of the university head or its legal representative(s).

The applicant will attach to the application a duly completed and signed financial identification sheet (FIS).

The FAC reserves the right to request a copy of the bank account details of the holder (nonprofit association, public utility foundation or private foundation).

Payment schedules

- For two-year projects:

The first deposit will be made within the month following the signature of the agreement with the FAC, if all the conditions are met. The second deposit will be made halfway through the projects scheduled timeline.

- For three-year projects:

The first deposit will be made within the month following the signature of the agreement with the FAC. The following deposits will be carried out annually up until halfway through the project.

Halfway through the project, continuation of the annual payments will be decided according to an intermediate report and the bank statement testifying to the use of at least 50 % of the already allocated amounts. This bank statement must be validated by the financial director of the research institution. If 50 % of the allocated funds have not yet been used at this stage, payments will be interrupted until an additional bank statement is received testifying that this expenses threshold has been reached. One or several simultaneous installments will then be paid as not to modify the total duration of the granting.

- For four-year projects:

The first deposit will be made within the month following the signature of the agreement with the FAC. The following deposits will be carried out annually up until halfway through the project.

Halfway through the project, the fundamental Scientific Committee will evaluate its progression and decide on the continuation of the granting. The applicant cannot obtain an increase of the initially granted funds. The subsequent annual payments will be determined according to the evaluated intermediate report. The applicant will also provide a bank statement testifying to the use of at least 50 % of the amounts already allocated. This bank statement must be validated by the financial director of the research institution. If 50 % of the allocated funds have not yet been used at this stage, payments will be interrupted until an additional bank statement is received testifying

that this expenses threshold has been reached. One or several simultaneous installments will then be paid as not to modify the total duration of the granting.

- *For all type of projects:*

10% of the total amount awarded to the project will be paid to the beneficiary(ies) upon receipt and validation of the final scientific and financial reports, as well as the lay summary of the results obtained.

Commitments of the research team to the FAC

By submitting a request for funds, the applicant commits him/herself to honor the requirements of the granting regulations.

When selected by the FAC for funding, the beneficiary will be asked to sign an agreement, whereby he/she commits him/herself to:

- Provide an intermediary report halfway through the agreed project duration, stating the progression of the research as well as detailing the forthcoming steps up until the end of the agreement. This report will come with a bank statement, validated by the financial director of the research institution, detailing the amount and nature of the expenses made thus far.
- Provide a final scientific report and a certified bank statement 2 months **after** the end of the agreement between the research institution and the FAC.
- The researcher is likely to contribute free of charge to the FAC's media campaigns with the general public and donators.
- For communication purposes by the FAC, the researcher undertakes to send it any scientific publication related to the granted research project, as soon as it is accepted by an editorial board. The researcher undertakes also to send, prior to their publication, any press release concerning the granted research project.
- The researcher will mention the funding by FAC in all oral and poster presentations related to the granted research project.

Commitment of the FAC to the research team

FAC processes your personal data confidentially in accordance with the general data protection regulation (GDPR). You can consult our Privacy and Data protection notice, available on the application platform of the FAC, for more information.